

Message Text

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EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP
SUBJ: POSSIBLE ANDREW YOUNG VISIT TO BURMA

REF: STATE 17032

1. I WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO HAVE ANDY YOUNG VISIT US HERE. WE COULD UTILIZE HIS PRESENCE TO PROGRAM ADVANTAGE WITH LITTLE DIFFICULTY. IF HE WERE TO COME, DEPENDING ON WHAT THE GUB DID OR DID NOT WANT TO DO AND THE LENGTH OF HIS STAY, I WOULD ENVISION ONE OR TWO INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH STUDENTS/ACADEMICS/LEADERS AT THE AMERICAN CENTER, A LOW-KEY DINNER/DISCUSSION AT THE RESIDENCE WITH SELECTED GUB SENIOR OFFICIALS AND POSSIBLY A SPEECH BEFORE THE UN ASSOCIATION OF BURMA (WHICH HAS EXTENDED ME AN INVITATION TO SPEAK IN EARLY MARCH, TO WHICH I HAVE NOT YET RESPONDED AND WHOM I THINK WOULDPROBABLY BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO HAVE ANDY).

2. THE REALLY UNPREDICTABLE FACTOR IS THE GUB ATTITUDE TOWARD A VISIT. IF WE BROUGHT HIM IN AS A SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL VISITING THE U.S. MISSION AND TAKING PART IN ITS PROGRAM, I AM CERTAIN THAT HE COULD BE COURTEOUSLY RECEIVED AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND POSSIBLY THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC PLANNING. HOWEVER, I DOUBT THAT THE GUB WOULD
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TAKE MUCH RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROGRAMMING HIS VISIT AND WOULD PROBABLY EXTEND ONLY MINIMAL VIP COURTESIES.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF WE REQUESTED THE GUB TO EXTEND HIM AN OFFICIAL RECOGNITION BEFITTING HIS CABINET STATUS, IT IS PROBLEMATIC AS TO WHAT THE GUB RESPONSE WOULD BE. IT WOULD REQUIRE CABINET CONSIDERATION AND PROBABLY A NE WIN DECISION,

PRECEDED BY A SLOW AND TORTUROUS CONSIDERATION OF THE EFFECT AN OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED VISIT WOULD HAVE ON THE GUB'S INTERNATIONAL POTENTIAL BALANCING ACT. (IF THE RESPONSE WERE NEGATIVE TO A FORMAL REQUEST, I DOUBT THAT WE COULD IMPLEMENT SUGGESTIONS IN PARAS ONE AND TWO ABOVE.) I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE GUB RECOGNIZES ANDY'S INTERNATIONAL STATURE AND HIS POSITION AND INFLUENCE IN THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. NEVERTHELESS, FOR REASONS OF ITS OWN-WHICH WE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO DISCERN OR FATHOM-IT COULD DECIDE, IF FORMALLY ASKED, THAT A VISIT WOULD NOT BE "CONVENIENT." LET ME HASTEN TO ADD THAT HIS VISIT MIGHT BE GREETED WITH OFFICIAL ENTHUSIASM. ONLY THIS MORNING ONE OF THE DEPUTY MINISTERS OF PLANNING AND FINANCE LAMENTED TO ME THE FACT THAT BOB OAKLEY'S RECENT VISIT WAS THE FIRST OF A SENIOR USG OFFICIAL IN SOME TIME (HE APPEARED BE UNAWARE OF THE STATUS OF FALCO AND O'KEEFE). HE IMPLIED THAT HE HOPED THERE WOULD BE MORE VISITS OF SENIOR USG OFFICIALS. HE WAS, OF COURSE, SPEAKING PERSONALLY AND NOT OFFICIALLY.

4. ONE POSSIBLE DRAWBACK IS THAT A YOUNG VISIT COULD RAISE GUB EXPECTATIONS REGARDING USG ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THE MISSION CAN HANDLE THIS EVENTUALITY WITH MINIMUM DIFFICULTY. ALSO BENEFITS TO USG WOULD BE INCREMENTAL AND SLOW IN EMERGING. THESE SHOULD NOT BE CONTROLLING FACTORS IN ARRIVING AT A DECISION.

5. IN SUM, I BELIEVE THAT AN ANDY YOUNG VISIT COULD BE USEFUL,
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PROVIDED IT CAN BE STAGED IN A MANNER THAT WILL NOT CAUSE THE GUB ANY DISCOMFORT. THE VISIT COULD (A) ENHANCE GUB UNDERSTANDING ON USG POSITIONS ON NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES / (B) DEMONSTRATE USG INTEREST IN SEASIA BROADER THAN RELATIONS WITH PRESENT/FORMER ALLIES/ENEMIES AND (C) FOSTER FURTHER GUB EMERGENCE FROM ISOLATION TOWARD MORE PRODUCTIVE RELATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD, ESPECIALLY THE WEST. THEREFORE, I PROPOSE THAT

I BE AUTHORIZED TO TAKE INFORMAL SOUNDINGS TO ASCERTAIN GUB INTEREST AND PREFERRED SCENARIO AND THEN ADVISE YOU ACCORDINGLY. AN INDICATION OF LENGTH OF STASKEND WHETHER THE VISIT WOULD OCCUR BEFORE OR AFTER ESCAP MEETING WOULD BE HELPFUL. I WOULD SUGGEST PRIOR TO ESCAP MEETING BECAUSE THE NEW PARLIAMENT WILL PROBABLY HAVE ITS FIRST SITTING IN MID TO LATE MARCH, WHICH MEANS THAT THE BALANCE OF GOVERNMENT WILL GRIND TO A HALT FOR INITIAL PERIOD OF PARLIAMENT SESSION.
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